

## FROM ROCK TO ROCK

it's only the third week in february and already  
the pussy willows at the side of the house are  
starting to turn a bright blossoming silver.

but it is cold in the house, as it has been  
cold for most of the winter. only when someone  
is visiting is it warm, since that is the only time

i'll turn up the heat and at night i'll build  
a fire. the fireplace has iron walls on the  
inside of it (i think they're iron) and it throws off

quite a bit of heat, making the living room  
a very comfortable place to be on a winter's  
night. it is rare that someone visits though,

considering how seldom i extend an invite.  
it seems this winter i have been swallowed  
by solitude. at times it is an utterly

joyous state to be in, and at others it  
is reduced simply to grief and i come to  
the conclusion that i live a terrible

and empty life. when i hit the one  
extreme of joy i might go whistling from  
plant to plant watering; at the other end of

the spectrum, in a grief-stricken state,  
i don't care if the plants live or die,  
and i sit at the kitchen table drinking cup

after cup of strong green tea, scribbling  
in black on loose pieces of paper.

there are no children, and so much  
time can pass between women.

these days i find myself searching  
for that one woman whom i can

grow old with. this afternoon,  
when the solitude took a rather grim

turn, i started walking across the field  
at the back of the house, but it

proved to be too muddy and  
i had to abandon the idea of  
going to the edge of the woods.

what i had in mind doing  
once i got there i'm not sure.

perhaps i would've done a minor  
repair on the stone wall

and then returned to the house  
for more tea. or maybe

i would've walked up  
the stream a ways, going from

rock to rock, trying to  
stay as much in the center

as possible. this,  
without fail, has always proven

to be a healthy  
exercise.